My dearest Mother,

I begin this letter with a hope that I shall have some time to write at length and tell you every thing relating to my present situation and prospects as well as my past adventures. My stay in Richmond was very long disagreeable to me. The weather was bad, and the house avoided; Cousin Ann and myself were obliged to sleep in Aunt Randolph's room and I having no convenient place to keep my clothes they were always in confusion for every trifling article that I wanted my trunk was to be unmade and then packed again. I saw very little company and was not at party during my stay in town except at houses where I did not visit. I had the vacation to be greatly imposed on by the martins mother whom Aunt N. had employed to make my dresses. On my arrival in Richmond I found it necessary to get a couple of dark dresses as I informed you before, one of these (the silk) was made & totally ruined. I was obliged to get a yard and a half more to put a new body and sleeves for the making of this dress a combic wrapper (the one which you know I was obliged to alter before I left home) a combic frock, and a white even-time silk which Aunt N. chose instead of the satin! The materials of which she furnished, a bonnet and a few trifling articles she brought me in a bill of 57 dollars some rents to give you an idea of her charges one item of her bill was 12 dollars and a half for the covering and trimming of your other shins and after all the piece is so stiff that I cannot
wear it. This vile extortion was the protégée of Aunt E. &
Nancy Watson, brought forward and rendered fashionable by
their patronage. Aunt Randolph has determined to cut her
off for her conduct to me, and the will lose in her res-
From a great deal more than she gained by healing me.
I had 60 dollars from Shelton & 250 from Warwick making
altogether 410. Of this, 50 went to Mrs Keith, 50 to Madam Q
whom I got my shoes & proof silk stockings 6 thread combi-
handkerchiefs, two silk drawers, gloves and some hiking article
150 to Baltimore. 27 my travelling expenses 5 in advance
to Sherry, 98 for my dark dresses, combs some gloves and shoes
to begin with, a silk casting handkerchief a little trunk, lace
for letting in the sleeves of my India muslin, 2 pr of silk
stockings, some velvet ribbon black pins for my hair, a white sack
etc. By costing up these sums you will find I have 80 dol-
lar and I am so well provided that I shall probably want
nothing worth mentioning during the winter. If I stay until
the spring I shall want a thaw bonnet and light shawl
for the season. Sherry will prefer being paid for her services in
a lump on her return to Richmond. I feel so uneasiness with
regard to my expenses on my account but whenever I think
of my poor father it makes my heart swell and the fear of
distraught him makes me wish myself at home again. I feel this
the more particularly as I am conscious of having been guilty
of a piece of extravagance which I will take you up; I was
tempted in Richmond by some very elegant shawls. Their price
was 35 dollars, they were very large and had the richest cou-
stems I ever saw. They were rather more fashionable and I
thought cheaper than the pelisse I should get in Baltimore.
in fact I bought one of them. I had not finished folding &
unfolding, seeing & admiring, counting the roses on a border
of the little roses in the narrow border, when a letter arrived from Mrs. saying that handsome pelisses were only 25 dollars in Baltimore.

I was thunderstruck at the news I had to hold my horse to the light, admire its beautiful texture, reflect how graceful it was on my return home, it would fall about your shoulders on great occasions, before I could console myself for having bought it, so far you will say was not so bad, but the worst is to come; when I arrived here, I put on the pelisse and walked out, everybody admired it, Mr. Todd declared he had never seen anything so elegant in the Parian shop; the fashionable milliner Mrs. Daniel was in raptures and said she had sold several not as handsome for 60 dollars. This praise was very grateful to me, but alas it could not keep me warm, neither would the snow, the spectators admired and I shivered, besides it was so large that I could scarcely manage it when I got in or out of the carriage it was in constant danger of hanging in the wheel. I hesitated a long time but at last passed for my health, it being subject to which I often was determined me, and I wrote to Mrs. Smith to lay out what remained of my 150 in a pelisse which I hope to receive in a week or ten days, and unless I do receive it I shall go out as little as possible. I have told you this story on a laughing way my dear mother, but I have really felt quite unhappy, I reproached myself very much for my thoughtlessness in purchasing a thing which I had sufficiently inferred I might have known would not answer my purpose. I think so much of my letters difficulties that I never buy any thing that I am not sorry for it, and think I might have done without the article, or that at least I should have waited until I was perfectly certain that I could not do and without I am not proof against temptation, for besides
the house I have purchased several little things which although they add to my comfort, I could have dispensed with. Among these I do not reckon the books which you will receive and which you must not sell one for sending, they only cost two dollars and I could not leave that Mr. Carr should return without carrying some little token from me. I have so far obeyed your commands as not to get separate articles for every member of the family, one of the books will amuse yourself and the girls, and the others will be of use to the boys, at least to the two younger ones, I could find nothing which would particularly suit dear Tom, the pictures plates are for the children, if you are afraid of her putting them in her mouth, put them away dear mother until the gets big enough to play with them without danger.

Feb 2nd

I have just received your two letters my dearest, mother one of them is more than a week old, what detained it so long on the road, I cannot conceive, you need not have given me so many changes to write carefully and without precision for I am by no means unhinged to err on that side. This letter as you will perceive from the date was begun three days ago. Mr. Carr was to have left Washington this morning, but as has delayed his journey I will send this by post and write another by him which shall contain every detail with regard to my dear employments &c. &c. suffice it to say for the present that Washington is not very gay this winter that I have been out but little owing to the bad weather and Mrs. Madison's indisposition. She was extremely ill for some days and is just beginning to leave her room owing to these circumstances I have made but few acquaintances, you shall certainly hear from me by Mr. Carr and receive the books which one Miss Jane written by Mrs. Bullets of Early Earnings
consisting of Story and Lucy (a tale for children of five or six years old I believe) Little Dog Trusty, The Orange Man, The Berry Orchard, Frank of Rosamond. Thank Virginia for her French letter which I shall answer if I can by Mr. Carr, but not in the same language as I am not a scholar enough for that. Mr. De Bovis, the French Charge D'affaires says "I know you can speak if you will and I am sure you understand my good French better than my bad English". I offered him to the contrary, but he does not seem to credit me, and measures my persisting in Rejection either to diffidence or obstinacy. I have seen Mr. & Mrs. Ferrerier. I will tell you all about them in my next Letter, as well as many other particulars which will interest you, such as, how I was dressed at the Drawing room, how I was very near being squeezed to death in the crowd &c.

Write to me often dearest Mother. Give my love to my dear Grandfather, Father, brothers and Sisters. Help Mrs. DeFalls for me. I wish she could see the elegant wagon that "poor Mrs. Hallcy" rides in now; her little note of admiration would be often repeated.

In obedience to your orders I will fill no more letters with details of bils &c. I have always subject to write on much more interesting to myself. Adieu. I am invited to a little party at Mrs. Dallas's to-morrow night if I go I will give you an account of it. When I am writing to you I never know when to stop, once more adieu, my dearest Mother. Remember me to poor Dallas. Send her an old acquaintance of mine, I believe she is to be with unalterable affection of your daughter C.W.B.